

News to Educate, Engage, and Empower Entrepreneurs

NFIB TO BEGIN BETA TEST OF NEW ENTREPRENEURSHIP SIMULATION



The National Federation of Independent Business has been working with Wharton School of Business to create an online simulation as a companion piece to their Entrepreneur-in-the-Classroom materials. The simulation will be called Johnny Money.

What is Johnny Money?

- Online, interactive small-business simulation game enhancing high-school students' exploration of entrepreneurship
- Engaging, flash-based technology allowing youth to learn about day-to-day functions of a small business
- Integral component of the Entrepreneur-in-the-Classroom umbrella of programs

- Based upon YEF's supplemental entrepreneurship curriculum
- Game topics include: creating a business plan, securing funding, managing employees and assets, marketing and sales
- Available nationwide Fall 2008

This simulation is their latest venture into helping promote entrepreneurship to the high school level and will be a way to give students hands-on experience running a small business. Students playing the game will be asked to pick one of two retail establishments to run "virtually" and make the day-to-day decisions that small business owners face.

The development team is made up of

(Continued on page 2)

MCCOOK'S KEYSTONE PROJECT FUNDING ANNOUNCED BY SENATOR NELSON'S OFFICE

McCook Economic Development Corporation received word last month of final approval of Federal funding for renovation of the historic Keystone Hotel as a technology, business and entrepreneurship center. The great news was relayed by Senator Ben Nelson's office.

In announcing the \$1,578,500 award from the Department of Commerce

Nelson said: "I want to congratulate the McCook Economic Development Corporation. I've been working with them on the Keystone project for about three years and their persistence and hard work has paid off. This grant represents a significant investment in the economy of McCook and Southwest Nebraska.

(Continued on page 2)

Inside this issue:

McCook's Keystone Project Funding Announced by Senator Nelson's Office	1-2
Inventors, Investors, and Entrepreneurs Club	3
E Business—Selling on the Internet Classes to be Offered	4
RBE Grant Applications Due February 15	5
MarketPlace: Opening Doors to Success 2nd Annual Conference Celebrates National Entrepreneurship Week	6
Targeted Teaching Topic	7
Entrepreneurship Career Pathway Task Force to Meet	8

We're on the web!

www.nde.state.ne.us/entreped/



NFIB TO BEGIN BETA TEST OF NEW SIMULATION

(Continued from page 1)

one of the most well respected collegiate entrepreneurial minds, an MBA candidate, an Ed.D candidate and three UPenn undergraduates, all of whom have an interest in educational gaming.



They are almost done with the simulation and are making plans to beta test it in February 2008 before the nationwide release in August 2008.

A demo of the game is located at: http://www.nfib.com/object/IO_29059.html. The list of beta sites is being finalized and will include Fairfax County Public Schools (VA), Arizona schools, as well as some Nebraska sites.

Both teacher and student input are being sought on the game's usability, functionality, level of fun, if there are bugs, etc. Classrooms participating will have

from February 8-28, 2008, to incorporate the game into their classrooms and provide feedback.

Changes will be made in phases after the beta testing period due to the cost and time associated with the changes. In the fall 2008 nationwide rollout, a **female** Johnny-type character will be included. In the beta testing, female characters are included for the business pulse points which will have more interaction with the user.

The pulse point characters will monitor five business aspects and alert the user when something is "changing" within their business.

If you would like more information please contact:

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MCCOOK'S KEYSTONE PROJECT FUNDING ANNOUNCED BY SENATOR NELSON'S OFFICE

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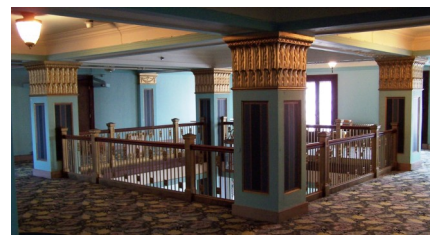
The Keystone Entrepreneurship Center will create an environment where new businesses can grow and prosper creating good jobs and economic opportunities while greatly contributing to the growing reputation of Nebraska as The Silicon Prairie."



Rex Nelson (left) shares plans outside the Keystone Hotel.

Rex Nelson, executive director of McCook Economic Development reports that this is a major step in a project that could ultimately create 40 new jobs and create over \$3.7 million in new economic impact annually.

Federal funds require a 50% local match which will be derived from several sources including local bank financing, tax increment financing, charitable contributions and city funding.



Commenting on the funding announcement Rex Nelson said: "I really appreciate the help of Senator Nelson's office throughout the process. This is a high impact project that will benefit the community in many ways. I look forward now to pulling together the final pieces of the puzzle that we need to provide locally to make it happen."

Construction could start as soon as March with a potential completion date of December 2008. The

INVENTORS, INVESTORS AND ENTREPRENEURS CLUB LAUNCHES IN SOUTHEAST NEBRASKA



Southeast Nebraska is launching an **Inventors, Investors and Entrepreneurs Club (I²E Club)**, Tuesday, January 22.

The I²E Club provides an open and supportive networking forum for inventors, investors and entrepreneurs of all ages. Subsequent meetings will be held

the second Tuesday of each

month at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Kimmel Education & Research Center in Nebraska City. Each session will begin with a networking social at 5:30 PM, which will be followed by introductions and an educational session or guest speaker at 6:15 PM. Each evening will end with an asset inventory exercise and question and answer session designed to help participants promote their expertise while locating solutions and resources.

Regional economic growth in rural areas is dependent on establishing an entrepreneurial culture that embraces self-sufficiency, change, risk-taking, innovation, invention, entrepreneurship and local investing. The I²E Club will help establish an entrepreneurial culture in Southeast Nebraska and is part of a larger regional effort dedicated to improving economic vitality in Southeast Nebraska.

This regional effort is being organized by River Country Economic Development Corporation (RCEDC) and is supported by individuals, organizations and communities throughout the area. The RCEDC is a 501(c) 6 not-for-profit corporation primarily dealing with the economic development needs of the Nebraska City/Otoe County area. RCEDC focuses on the retention, expansion and attraction of business and industry in the region.

Dr. Connie Reimers-Hild, Unit Leader at the University of Nebraska Lincoln's Kimmel Education and Research Center, is coordinating the I²E Club. "It is imperative for Southeast Nebraska to create an entrepreneurial culture and establish itself as an area where individuals have the opportunity to pursue their passion in a supportive environment, and the I²E Club

is designed to fulfill this mission, says Dr. Reimers-Hild. She goes on to say, "Current opportunities to capture consumers and market share with themes such as "quality," "safe," "local" and "green" create an opportunity for Nebraskans to sell positive attributes and traditions associated with our heritage creating a "Buy Nebraska" trend that consumers can trust. The I²E Club is a platform that can be used to promote this marketing trend."

"In the modern world we have invented ways of speeding up invention, and people's lives change so fast that a person is born into one kind of world, grows up in another, and by the time his children are growing up, lives in still a different world" —Margaret Mead

Dr. Reimers-Hild "hopes many will come and be a part of the I²E revolution." She also shared that the group is seeking speakers to share their stories; inventors who want to move their ideas forward; entrepreneurs who want to start and grow businesses; and sponsors to financially support the networking socials.

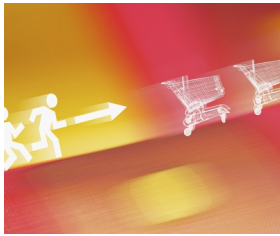
"As an I²E Club we can work together to help others realize the value of our local resources and talents. We can establish new ventures while helping existing businesses grow and prosper. It is time for us to let innovation and creativity flow while breaking down barriers that hinder progress," states Dr. Connie Reimers-Hild.

The first meeting of the I²E Club will be held at 5:30 PM on January 22, 2008. Organizers are also working to add distance-delivery components to this program. More information on the distance-delivery component will be available in the near future.

Anyone wishing to be involved in, to participate in or to support the I²E Club should contact Dr. Reimers-Hild at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Kimmel Education & Research Center at 402.873.3166 or via e-mail to creimers2@unl.edu.

EBUSINESS - SELLING ON THE INTERNET

Every day new tools and applications for doing business on-line evolve to provide the business owner as well as the customer a better on-line shopping experience. eCommerce is all about having a website, conducting business on-line, communicating with the customers and suppliers, knowing your competition and being in the global market. It is a tool for moving your business forward in a time of rapid change.



e-Business - Selling on the Internet is a four week course for businesses who are contemplating taking their business on-line. The goal of the course is to give business owners a better understanding of applying

technology to increase profits.

Topics covered during the four week course include - what customers are looking for, what the trends of the e-World are, identifying who your competition is and what they are doing. The course will help you identify who should design your site for you, how to determine what URL you should have and how to get one. We look at the good, bad and what were they thinking in Web Site Design, and begin the businesses to think

about e-Marketing - keywords, search engines and how to does one get found.

This 12-hour four-week class provided by the University of Nebraska Extension is being held in two locations in February and March.

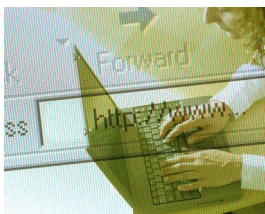
Kearney - February 19, 26, March 4 and 11 - UNK - 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. CST

Kimball - March 27, April 3, 10, and 17 - Kimball County Courthouse Annex - 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. MST

Cost of the eBusiness-Selling on the Internet class is \$99.00 and registration is due by February 6th. You can register on-line at <http://cariregistration.unl.edu> or by phone by calling Leslie Crandall, Extension Educator at 308.995.4222, email at lcrandall1@unl.edu or Connie Hancock, Extension Educator at 308.254.4455, email at chancock1@unl.edu.

Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

GROW NEBRASKA PILOTING E BAY STORE



GROW Nebraska is piloting an eBay store in cooperation with the University of Nebraska Extension Specialists. This project is under way and scheduled to be online April 1, 2008. Thirty

members have been sought who have an interest in selling on eBay.

Sign-up ended January 15th and GROW will choose 30 members by January 30.

Eligibility requirements included:

- Participation in the Kearney store
- Operational web site in place
- \$5.00 monthly fee

Products will be shipped out of the Kearney store by GROW staff. Interested GROW Nebraska members should contact GROW Nebraska, PO Box 7, Holbrook, NE 68948 or email Janell@growneb.org.

GROW Nebraska

GROW Nebraska's mission is to maximize the state's entrepreneurial spirit, create an economically viable and sustainable environment for entrepreneurs and generate social awareness through promotion, marketing and education.

If you would like to learn more about GROW Nebraska, please visit www.grownebraska.com to learn about their services, information about members, benefits of membership and about how to become a member.

RURAL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE FEBRUARY 15, 2008

If you haven't heard the acronym RBEG bandied about, you are interested in rural economic development, and want to help small and emerging businesses, you may want to read on.

Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG) finance and facilitate the development of small and emerging private business enterprises in rural areas (towns with populations equal to or less than 50,000). Priority is given to applications for projects in open country, rural communities, towns of 25,000 or less, and economically distressed communities. Eligibility is limited to public bodies, private nonprofit corporations and Indian tribes on Federal and State reservations.

Grants may be used for technical assistance, for acquisition of land, buildings and infrastructure to enhance business development, and for the establishment of small business revolving loan funds.



Examples of technical assistance include feasibility studies, business plans, business development training, speakers or workshops. Acquisition examples include construction, purchase or renovation of a business incubator facility or classroom facility for business development training.

Facilities and equipment must be owned by the applicant.

Contact the office nearest you for more information: the Scottsbluff office at 308.632.2195, ext. 4; the Kearney office at 308.237.3118, ext. 4; the Beatrice office at 402.223.3125, ext. 4; the Norfolk office at 402.371.5350, ext. 4; or the Ainsworth office at 402.387.2242, ext. 4.

Information is also available online at :

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/rbeg.htm>

LIL' BUSINESS REAPS BIG REWARDS FROM MARKETPLACE

Running a business is hard work and finding information on how to finance and professionally run a business can be even harder. Now there is a conference to assist those searching for that information - ***MarketPlace: Opening Doors to Success***.

Karen Runkle had worked as a substitute teacher, but wanted a career she could be excited about. She answered the call of entrepreneurship after an unsuccessful search for some fresh produce. What started out as a craving for a fresh tomato, ended up as *Lil' Ladybug Gardens & Greenhouse*.

Karen knew there was a customer base for local produce and Community Supported Agriculture. All she needed was training and some money to invest in her idea.

Karen initially contacted the Rural Enterprise Assistance Project (REAP), a microenterprise development program of the Center for Rural Affairs

that works with startup and existing small businesses in Nebraska. She attended 'Business Plan Basics' training before she opened Lil' Ladybug.

Then in February 2007 she attended the first MarketPlace Conference in Kearney. There Karen learned to keep good records for her business, networked with other entrepreneurs and service providers, and acquired new customers. "The MarketPlace seminar in Kearney was a great place to learn and rub elbows with other entrepreneurs," says Karen.

Now with the tools she has acquired, her greenhouse is successful and since the initiation of her business in 2005, business has tripled.

Don't miss it. Attend MarketPlace on February 27th, 2008 in Columbus, NE at the New World Inn. Register at www.cfra.org/marketplace/home.

MARKETPLACE: OPENING DOORS TO SUCCESS

2nd Annual Small Business Conference to be Hosted in Columbus, NE

One of the many events scheduled for National Entrepreneurship Week in Nebraska is the second annual MarketPlace Conference. For those who attended last year, you know it was an outstanding event. If you didn't have that chance, you will definitely want to mark your calendar for this year's conference, February 27 in Columbus, Nebraska at the New World Inn.

What is the MarketPlace?



MarketPlace is a one-day event presented by the Center for Rural Affairs and many partners focused on strengthening small businesses and rural

communities. The conference offers training, networking, and professional development opportunities for startup and existing small businesses, service providers, rural communities, and family farmers and ranchers.

The First Annual MarketPlace Conference was held in Kearney, Nebraska in February 2007 and was an overwhelming success with 500 attendees. The conference planners intend to make this year's MarketPlace even better!

Key Elements of the Conference:

- **The Networking Area** will feature 50 exhibit booths filled with successful small business men and women, service providers, and other conference sponsors. Attendees will be able to meet exhibitors throughout the day to ask questions, gather information, and make connections.
- **Professional Development** will be enhanced through a series of 28 teach-in sessions with lively, knowledgeable speakers on critical aspects of building a successful enterprise or community.
- **Expert Q & A** - professionals will be dispersed throughout the exhibit hall to answer specific questions on legal matters, finances, marketing, technology, design, and more.

Who Should Attend?

MarketPlace has something for everyone interested in rural entrepreneurship and the future of rural communities.

You should attend if you are a:

- Small business owner or someone who dreams of owning their own business
- Service provider
- Farmer or rancher interested in agricultural entrepreneurship
- Member of a rural community or a community leader
- Policy maker
- Youth interested in small business and rural communities
- Hispanic entrepreneur

Attend the MarketPlace and tell others about it! Small business development drives job growth and economic development in rural areas. You won't want to miss out.

Early - Bird Registration Ends January 27, 2008.

Register now to save!

- ☒ Individual-\$25
- ☒ Guest-\$15
- ☒ Teacher-\$15
- ☒ Student-\$15

Regular Registration after January 27th:

- ☒ Individual-\$50
- ☒ Guest-\$30
- ☒ Teacher-\$30
- ☒ Student-\$25



For more information about MarketPlace contact: Center for Rural Affairs, Joy Marshall, 402.614.5558 or joym@cfra.org or find information at www.cfra.org/marketplace/home.



Targeted Teaching Topic



AMERICA'S YOUNG INNOVATORS

Innovation and Passion

When you think Smithsonian, you may have a mental image of the famous museum complex based in Washington, D.C. Think museums and you probably think of the old...ancient relics in displays, rows and rows of dusty shelves lined with artifacts, and a focus on the past. But, the Smithsonian and other museums are about capturing the human experience, capturing snapshots of the present, and peering into the future.



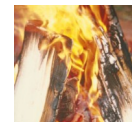
That was evident in a special issue published by Smithsonian magazine in Fall, 2007 entitled *37 Under 36, America's Young Innovators in the Arts and Sciences*. It is an amazing read as it profiles "up-and-coming people" who are not only innovating in their chosen fields "but also crossing disciplines to make a difference in our world."

All of the honorees are 36 years or younger. They are people who may very well help to shape not only your future, but that of the entire planet. The one common theme you'll read in each profile is **PASSION**. Each has found what he or she is passionately interested in, have focused on that, and are making a difference in the world.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Entrepreneurs are people who make something better, whether it is an idea, a good, or a service. They are risk-takers and they are **passionate** about their venture. Many entrepreneurs are inventors which means that they are innovating, creating, and thinking constantly about how to make something better. It's not just about selling a product and making millions of dollars...it's about pursuing a dream and not giving up.

Doing Well While Doing Good



It's possible to be an innovator and create something that could not only be economically productive, but also make the world a better place in which to live as evidenced by:

- ☑ Michael Wong—who is exploring his idea to use gold to clean up toxic waste. He plans to combine gold with another precious metal (palladium) forming nanoparticles to treat polluted groundwater converting the nasty carcinogens (cancer-causing agents) into "happy byproducts."
- ☑ Christina Galitsky—who has created an energy-efficient cook stove for displaced refugees to cook their meals. The cook stove allows refugees in war-torn Darfur to avoid scavenging for scarce wood, putting themselves at risk from marauders. At the same time, it is saving precious natural resources. Metalworkers are now manufacturing the stoves and the hope is to distribute 30,000 in the near future.
- ☑ Luis Von Ahn—who is creating computer games "with a purpose" that get people from around the world to collaborate and cooperate to accomplish useful tasks such as translating documents, making it easier for the visually impaired to search the Web.

And, these are just a few examples from a single magazine. Imagine the thousands of other innovators out there, following their passions and being "entrepreneurial" who are or will be making our world a better place.

Source: Smithsonian, Special Issue, *37 Under 36-America's Young Innovators in the Arts and Sciences*, Fall 2007.

NEBRASKA ENTREPRENEURSHIP CAREER PATHWAY TASK FORCE TO MEET JANUARY 25TH



NET-Force, the Entrepreneurship Career Pathway task force of FutureForce Nebraska will be meeting January 25th in Grand Island at the Central Community College campus, Administration Room 80, from 10:00-3:00.

NET-Force identifies and leverages educational resources to Educate, Engage, and Empower current and potential Entrepreneurs.

Dennis Headrick, chairperson of the task force, will be leading the meeting that will focus on the accomplishments and action plans for the task force.

The career pathway group has been focused and energetic in accomplishing a host of activities and initiatives throughout the two years of its existence. A key accomplishment was the development of syllabi and course titles for six core entrepreneurship courses

for Nebraska community colleges that were approved by the Chief Instructional Officers of all six of the Nebraska Community College systems.

The group will be taking on a full agenda:

- ☑ Updates on members' activities
- ☑ Global Competitiveness Grant update-UNK
- ☑ Microbusiness Training & Development Program-Omaha update
- ☑ Entrepreneurship Week (Feb. 23 - March 1) update and sharing of ideas
- ☑ Future Force Strategy and Design Report
- ☑ Nebraska Enterprise Opportunity Network
- ☑ Career Cluster Model update
- ☑ Curriculum Committee review/update
- ☑ Career Connection update
- ☑ NACCE Conference report
- ☑ Professional development planning
- ☑ Funding - projects/ideas/sources

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For timely information on topics related to entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship education (K-20) at the local, state, regional, national and international levels and to share information with others, sign up for the Nebraska Entrepreneurship Education Listserv log on to:

<http://lists.k12.ne.us/mailman/listinfo/entre-ed>



Skills for Lifelong Learning, Earning, and Living